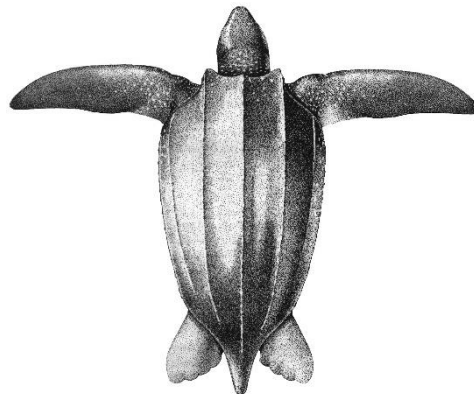


www.ukturtles.online
www.strandings.com

British & Irish Marine Turtle Strandings & Sightings Annual Report 2024

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Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreacht
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Local Government and Heritage



Ariennir yn Rhannol gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Part Funded by
Welsh Government

CONTENTS.

	Page
1 SUMMARY	4
2 INTRODUCTION	5
2.1 The UK Turtle Implementation Group.	5
3 MATERIALS AND METHODS	7
3.1 Live Animals.	7
3.2 Dead Animals.	8
4 RESULTS	9
4.1 Sightings.	12
4.2 Strandings.	14
5 MATTERS ARISING	20
5.1 Retrospective Reports.	20
6 LIVE STRANDING EVENTS 2024	20
6.1 Rehabilitation.	20
6.2 Repatriation.	22
7 BYCATCH	22
8 SAMPLES & POST-MORTEM EXAMINATIONS	22
9 DATA SHARING	23
10 UNUSUAL OCCURENCES	23
11 PUBLICITY	23
12 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	24
13 APPENDICES	24

List of Figures.		page
Figure 1.	Current Technical Co-ordination of the Cetacean Strandings Investigation Programme (CSIP).	5
Figure 2.	All species sightings & strandings 2014-2024 live and dead.	10
Figure 3.	All species sightings & strandings 2022.	11
Figure 4.	All species sightings & strandings 2023.	11
Figure 5.	All species sightings & strandings 2024.	11
Figure 6.	Kemp's ridley sightings 2024.	12
Figure 7.	Leatherback sightings 2024.	12
Figure 8.	Loggerhead sightings 2024.	13
Figure 9.	Unidentified sightings 2024.	13
Figure 10.	Green strandings 2024.	14
Figure 11.	Kemp's ridley strandings 2024.	15
Figure 12.	Leatherback strandings 2024.	15
Figure 13.	Loggerhead strandings 2024.	16
Figure 14.	Olive ridley strandings 2024.	16
Figure 15.	Unidentified strandings 2024	16
Figure 16.	All leatherbacks by month.	17
Figure 17.	All leatherbacks average over 2014-2024.	17
Figure 18.	All loggerheads by month.	17
Figure 19.	All loggerheads average over 2014-2024.	17
Figure 20.	All Kemp's ridleys by month.	18
Figure 21.	All Kemp's ridleys average 2014-2024.	18
Plate 1.	Volunteer Royal Navy crew undergoing turtle handling.	21
Plate 2.	T2024/06 Found alive at Barrow-in-Furness..	23

List of Tables.

Table 1.	2024 Total number of reported marine turtles for British Isles & Ireland (live & dead).	9
Table 2.	2024 Number of live marine turtles.	9
Table 3.	2024 Number of dead marine turtles.	9
Table 4.	Cumulative number of records in the TURTLE database.	18
Table 5.	Species Comparison from all TURTLE database records.	19
Table 6.	'TURTLE' Database Species Totals (1748 - 2024).	19

1. SUMMARY

A total of 35 live and dead marine turtles were reported to TURTLE during 2024. Seven Kemp's ridley turtles; 10 leatherback turtles, 15 loggerhead turtles, 2 Green turtles and 1 Unidentified.

Live sightings

Eight turtles were sighted alive at sea. Six leatherbacks, 1 loggerhead and 1 Unidentified

Dead sightings

No dead sightings were reported in 2024.

Live stranded

There were 9 live stranded turtles reported in 2024. These were 6 loggerhead turtles; 4 in England, 2 in Wales. One Kemp's ridley in England and 2 Green turtles in Ireland.

Dead strandings

A total of 18 turtles were reported stranded dead.

Four leatherback turtles stranded dead. Two in England and 2 in Ireland.

Six Kemp's ridley turtles stranded dead. One in Scotland, 2 in England, 2 in Wales and 1 in Ireland.

Eight loggerhead turtles stranded dead. Three in Scotland, 3 in England, 1 in Jersey and 1 in Wales.

Post-mortem examination

Four loggerhead turtles and 2 Kemp's ridley turtles were recovered for post-mortem examination within the CSIP, SMASS, Cornwall Marine Pathology Team and Irish network.

Rehabilitation

Of the 9 live-strandings in 2024, 3 turtles survived in rehabilitation.

Repatriation

The 5 loggerhead turtles that failed to be repatriated in 2023 were joined by a sixth in 2024 and were kindly repatriated in the high seas close to the Azores courtesy of the Royal Navy.

T2024/06 the loggerhead turtle found stranded at Barrow-in-Furness with a non transmitting satellite tag, was flown to the Azores for release by Sea Life Centres.

TURTLE record totals

The current total of 2988 since 1748 is broken down thus:

1377 Ireland; 745 England; 439 Scotland; 313 Wales; 41 Northern Ireland; 37 Isle of Man; 21 Channel Islands; 15 Offshore.

2. INTRODUCTION

In 1990, the ‘Collaborative UK Marine Mammal Strandings Project’ was initiated and part-funded by the UK Department of the Environment (now Defra). The project involves detailed pathological and other investigations of stranded marine mammal carcasses (mostly cetacean) from UK waters. It forms part of the Department's international obligations towards conservation agreements, including the ‘Agreement on the conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas’ (ASCOBANS). Detailed pathological investigations of stranded marine turtles were included in 2001 and the systematic recording and occasional examination of stranded basking sharks began in 2007. The project is now named the ‘Cetacean Strandings Investigation Programme’ (CSIP, www.ukstrandings.org) (see **Figure 1**).

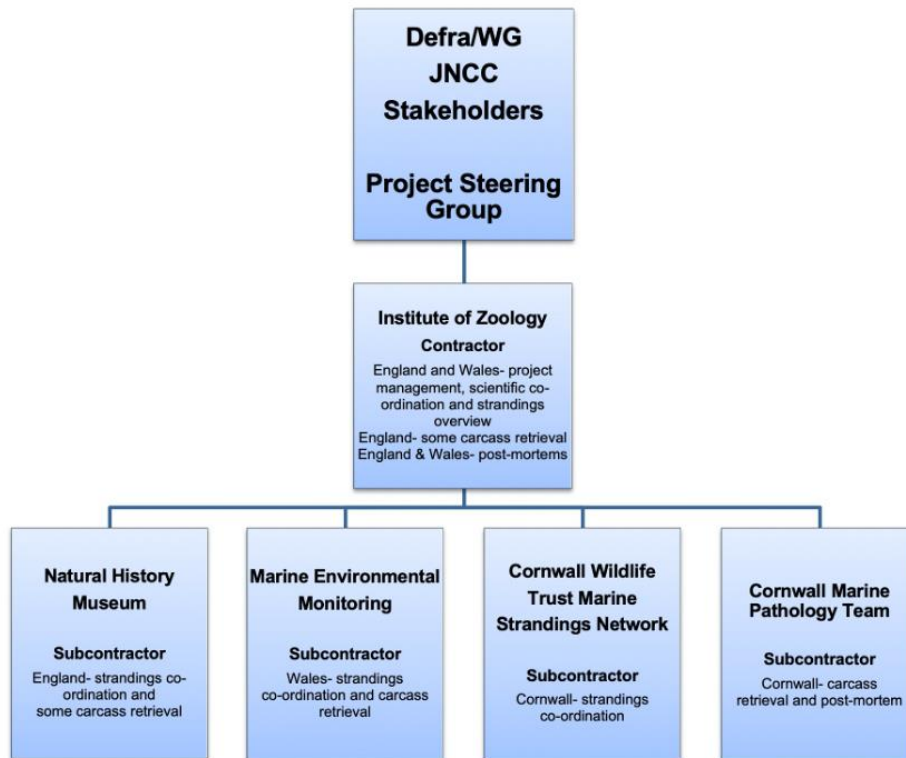


Figure 1. *Current technical co-ordination of the Cetacean Strandings Investigation Programme (CSIP).*

2.1 The UK Turtle Implementation Group.

Historically, in 1999, English Nature, now Natural England, published the UK Marine Turtles Grouped Species Action Plan (SAP) on behalf of the UK Biodiversity Group. The SAP was part of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and aimed to enhance marine turtle conservation in UK waters and in the UK Overseas Territories as well as raise awareness and knowledge of their occurrence, legal protection and measures to enhance conservation amongst marine users and the general public. The SAP was implemented by a group of organisations led by joint lead partners the Marine Conservation Society (MCS) and the Amphibian & Reptile Conservation Trust¹ (ARC). The contact agency was Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH). The Turtle Implementation Group (TIG) now only communicate electronically and contribute to the project as a steering panel. TIG consists of the following organisations:-

¹ Formally Herpetological Conservation Trust (HCT).

- **Amphibian & Reptile Conservation Trust** is an authority on reptile and amphibian conservation issues and is an active participant in Governmental and third sector nature conservation programmes across the UK www.arc-trust.org.
Contact: *Dr Karen Haysom, 01202 391319* karen.haysom@arc-trust.org
- The **Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture (DEFA)** is the Isle of Man Government's department responsible for species protection and site designation under the Manx Wildlife Act 1990. The Department is also the key Isle of Man contact for strandings and sightings of sea turtles.
Contact: *Dr Peter Duncan, 01624 685884 or 07624 300525 (mob),* peter.duncan@gov.im
Manx Wildlife Trust also record strandings on behalf of DEFA.
Contact: *Dr Lara Howe on 01624 844432.* lara@mwt.im
- The **Department of Agriculture, Environment, and Rural Affairs (DAERA) Marine & Fisheries Division** is responsible for protecting the marine environment while maximising the sustainable use of its resources, now and for future generations.
Contact: *Dr Liz Pothanikat, 028 905 69421.* Liz.Pothanikat@daera-ni.gov.uk
- **Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC)** is the public body that advises the UK Government and devolved administrations on UK-wide and international nature conservation.
Contact: *Nikki Taylor, 01733 866902*
- **Marine Conservation Society (MCS)** is the UK charity dedicated to the protection of the marine environment and its wildlife. MCS was the joint Lead Partner of the Marine Turtles Grouped Species Action Plan and coordinates the TIG. www.mcsuk.org
Contact: *Greg Wannell, 01989 566017*
- **Marine Environmental Monitoring (MEM)** is a member of the Defra "UK Cetacean Strandings Investigation Programme", www.strandings.com www.ukstrandings.org MEM also manages 'TURTLE' the British Isles & Irish database holding both records of sightings and strandings of marine turtles dating back to 1748.
Contact: *Rod Penrose, rodpenrose@strandings.com or Mat Westfield mat.westfield@strandings.com (Reporting telephone No. 01239 683033.)*
- **Marine Turtle Research Group** is based at the University of Exeter, Cornwall Campus and carries out fundamental and applied research on marine turtles in British waters, the Mediterranean, West Africa and throughout the UK Overseas Territories.
Contacts: *Prof Brendan Godley & Prof Annette Broderick 01326 371 861* B.J.Godley@exeter.ac.uk
- **MEDASSET**, founded in 1988, is an international environmental NGO registered as a Non Profit Organisation working for the conservation of sea turtles and their habitats throughout the Mediterranean, through scientific research, environmental education, political lobbying and awareness-raising.
Contact: *Lily Venizelos, + 30 210 3613572* medasset@medasset.org
- **National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS)**, part of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, provides the legislative and policy framework for the conservation of nature and biodiversity in the Republic of Ireland. It also oversees its implementation, based on good science, with particular emphasis on the protection of habitats and species, through the designation and conservation of sites under EU Directives and national legislation.
Contact: *Dr Ferdia Marnell, +3531 8883290* Ferdia.marnell@npws.gov.ie
- **Natural England (NE)** is the Government agency that champions the conservation of wildlife and natural features throughout England.
Contact: *Tim Bernhard, 07775 026622* tim.bernhard@naturalengland.org.uk
- **Natural Resources Wales (NRW)** is the largest Welsh Government Sponsored Body. Formed in April 2013, it took over the functions of the Countryside Council for Wales, Forestry Commission Wales and the Environment Agency in Wales, as well as certain Welsh Government functions. Its purpose is to pursue sustainable management of natural resources. This means looking after air, land, water, wildlife, plants and soil to improve Wales' well-being, and provide a better future for everyone.
Contact: *Dr Tom Stringell, 03000 653000* tom.stringell@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk
- **NatureScot** is Scotland's nature agency providing advice to Scottish Government. NatureScot promotes the care, improvement, responsible enjoyment, understanding, appreciation and sustainable use of Scotland's natural heritage.
Contact: *Marine Monitoring Team, MPA@nature.scot 01463 725 018*
- **Queen's University Belfast:** Dr Jonathan Houghton works on the foraging ecology and migratory behaviour of marine turtles with a particular focus on the predator prey interactions of leatherback turtles and gelatinous zooplankton (jellyfish).
Contact: *Dr Jonathan Houghton, 028 90972297* j.houghton@qub.ac.uk
- **The Wildlife Trusts** is a partnership of 47 Wildlife Trusts, across the UK, caring for more than 2,400 nature reserves. It campaigns for the protection of wildlife and invests in the future by helping people of all ages to gain a greater appreciation and understanding of nature. The Wildlife Trusts Basking Shark Project contributes at sea survey data, from the west coast of Britain on an annual basis.
Contact: *Dr Nick Tregenza, 01736 711783.*
- **University College Cork** *Dr Tom Doyle*, School of Biological, Earth & Environmental Sciences. Sightings & strandings can also be reported online in the Republic of Ireland via the National Biodiversity Data Centre's turtle sightings page: <https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/record/sea-turtles>
Contact: *Dr Tom Doyle, 353-(0) 87 1354938 (mobile).*

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Contact details vary for different parts of the British Isles & Republic of Ireland and the Turtle Code (Appendix 2.) should be consulted for the relevant contacts.

In **England & Wales** a 24 hour answer phone **01239 683033**, is interrogated at regular intervals. A message requests callers to leave details of the stranding or sighting and location, along with their name and contact phone number, so they may be reached if confirmation of details are required. A dedicated email address to receive digital photographs has been created info@strandings.com Live strandings and entanglements should be reported to the RSPCA on **0300 1234 999** and/or British Divers Marine Life Rescue (BDMLR) **01825 765546**.

For **Scotland** all records should be reported to the Scottish Marine Animal Strandings Scheme (SMASS) **07979 245893** reports@strandings.org Live strandings and entanglements should be reported to the SSPCA on **03000 999 999** and/or British Divers Marine Life Rescue (BDMLR) **01825 765546**.

For **Northern Ireland** all records of live or dead turtles should be reported to DAERA Marine and Fisheries Division on **028 905 69421** or [Marine Conservation Team | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

UK and Irish turtle sightings and strandings can also be reported using the UK & RoI Turtle Code online at <http://www.euroturtle.org/turtlecode/default.htm> or www.ukturtles.online

In **Ireland** all records should be reported to Dr Tom Doyle, School of Biological, Earth & Environmental Sciences, **353-(0) 87 1354938** (mobile). Sightings & strandings can also be reported online in Ireland via the National Biodiversity Data Centre's turtle sightings page: <https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/record/sea-turtles>

On the **Isle of Man** all marine animal strandings should be reported to DEFA (Fisheries) on **01624 685835/685884** or directly to Dr Peter Duncan **07624 300525**, or Dr Lara Howe **07624 450879**.

The following criteria are applied: -

3.1 Live Animals

(Condition code 1) ²

In 1994 the Marine Animal Rescue Coalition (MARC) was formed. This consists of all the major animal welfare and conservation bodies involved with marine mammals/turtles in the UK. It has been agreed that in the case of a live-stranding the first point of call would be the RSPCA (England & Wales), SSPCA (Scotland) as they support a manned 24-hour emergency phone. The RSPCA/SSPCA or British Divers Marine Life Rescue (BDMLR) would then contact the relevant organisations, Marine Environmental Monitoring etc.

Contacts and advice can be found in the UK Turtle Code (Appendix 2.).

3.2 Dead Animals

(Condition code 2a extremely fresh as if just died)²

(Condition code 2b slight decomposition)²

(Condition code 3 moderate decomposition)²

Health and safety precautions are followed with the animal being handled only with gloved hands. Preferably it is then taken immediately for *post-mortem* examination, but due to funding cuts in 2006 freezing is now an option until transport becomes available.

(Condition code 4 advanced decomposition)²

(Condition code 5 mummified carcass)²

Species identified, basic measurements taken together with skin for DNA. Health and safety precautions being observed. Local Authorities then contacted for safe disposal of remains.

All live and dead marine turtles are allocated a “T0000/001” number. “T” designates the animal as a marine turtle, 0000 is the year and /001 is an individual number for each record of the same year. Records of all strandings & sightings in the British Isles & Republic of Ireland are kept by the Strandings Co-ordinator. Copies of *post-mortem* examination reports are sent from the Strandings Co-ordinator to the finder and others associated with the relevant stranding.

² Body conditions based on Kuiken, T. and Garcia Hartmann, M (1991) Proceedings of the European Cetacean Society workshop on cetacean pathology: dissection techniques and tissue sampling. ECS newsletter 17, Special issue: 39pp

4. RESULTS

The following three tables include marine turtle ‘sightings’ and ‘strandings’ reported through 2024.

Table 1.

2024 Total number of reported marine turtles for the UK & Ireland. (live & dead).													
Species	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
Green turtle (<i>Chelonia mydas</i>)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
Hawksbill turtle (<i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kemp's ridley turtle (<i>Lepidochelys kempii</i>)	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	7
Leatherback turtle (<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>)	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	3	0	1	10
Loggerhead turtle (<i>Caretta caretta</i>)	5	3	2	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	15
Olive ridley turtle (<i>Lepidochelys olivacea</i>)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unidentified	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total animals	6	5	2	3	0	1	1	4	3	3	1	6	35

Table 2.

2024 Number of live marine turtles.													
Species	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
Green turtle (<i>Chelonia mydas</i>)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
Hawksbill turtle (<i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kemp's ridley turtle (<i>Lepidochelys kempii</i>)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Leatherback turtle (<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>)	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	1	0	0	6
Loggerhead turtle (<i>Caretta caretta</i>)	2	1	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	7
Olive ridley turtle (<i>Lepidochelys olivacea</i>)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unidentified	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total animals	2	1	0	2	0	1	1	4	2	1	1	2	17

Table 3.

2024 Number of dead marine turtles.													
Species	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
Green turtle (<i>Chelonia mydas</i>)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hawksbill turtle (<i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kemp's ridley turtle (<i>Lepidochelys kempii</i>)	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	6
Leatherback turtle (<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	1	4
Loggerhead turtle (<i>Caretta caretta</i>)	3	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Olive ridley turtle (<i>Lepidochelys olivacea</i>)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unidentified	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total animals	4	4	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	4	18

The general geographical distribution of each species, strandings and sightings, are plotted on the following maps. Although the maps are generated directly from the data stored, they should be regarded as showing distribution of animals rather than giving absolute counts. While the co-ordinate system and the mapping software can theoretically differentiate between points as close as 1 metre apart, even with separations of 100 metres at the scale at which these maps are presented, some symbols may appear to overlap completely.

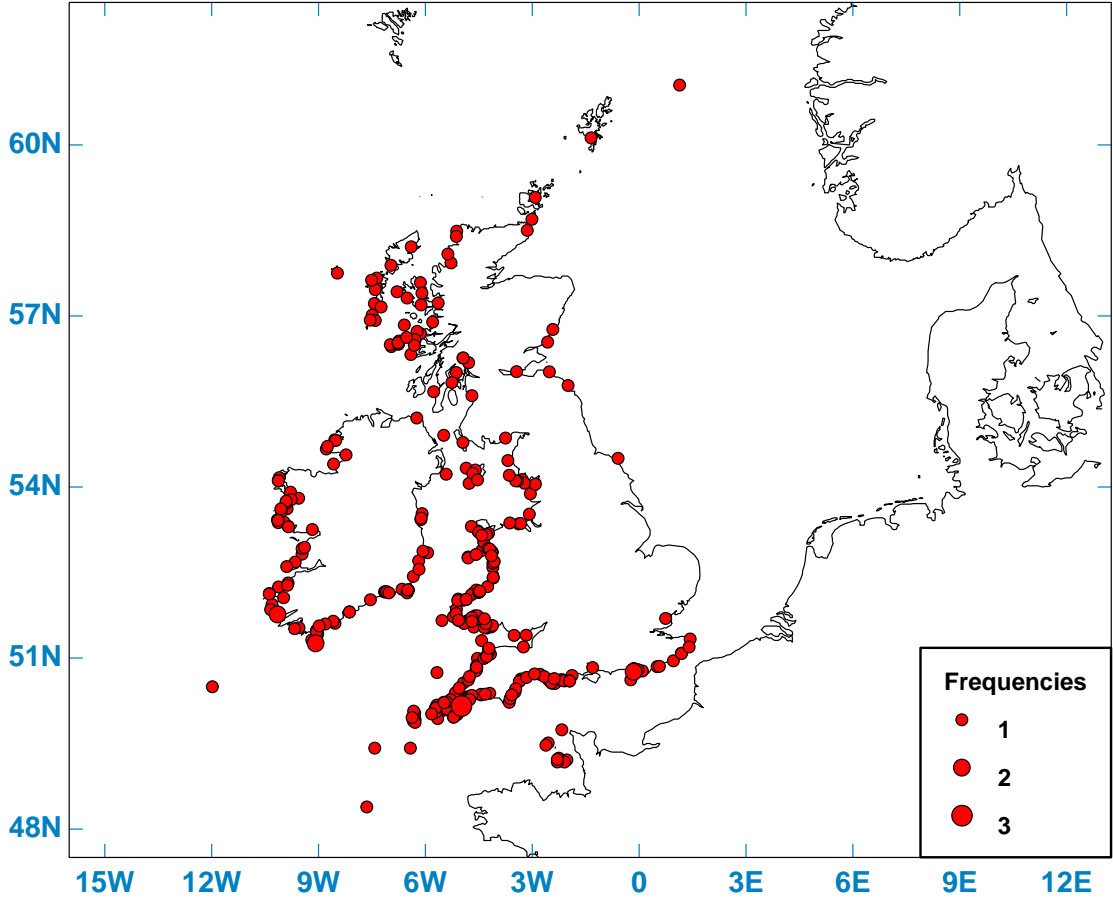


Figure 2. *All species sightings & strandings 2014-2024 live and dead.*

All species, sightings & strandings, live and dead over the eleven year period 2014-2024 have been plotted in **Figure 2.**

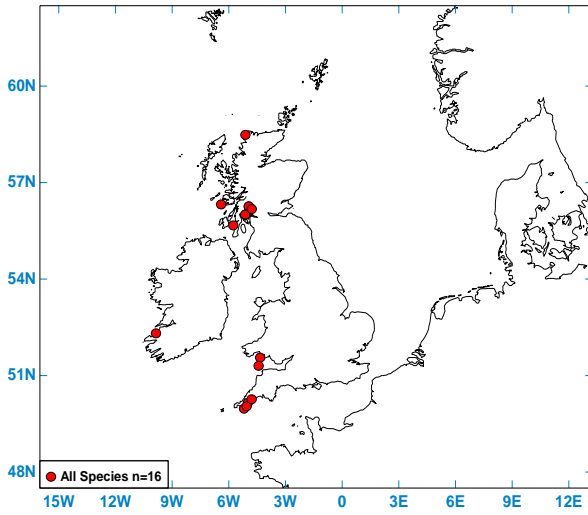


Figure 3. *All species sightings & strandings 2022.*

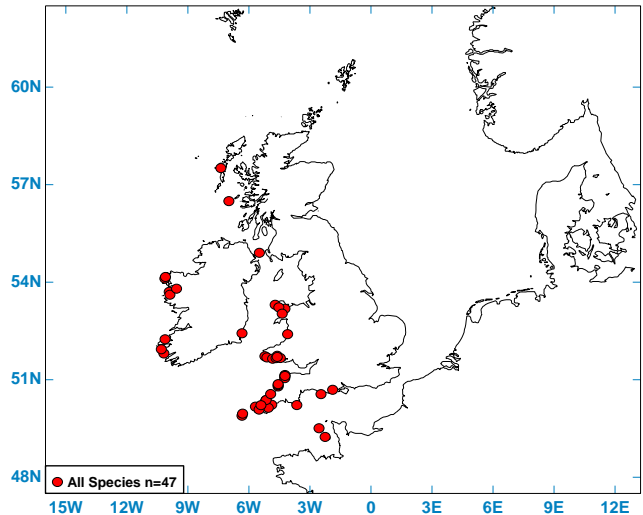


Figure 4. *All species sightings & strandings 2023.*

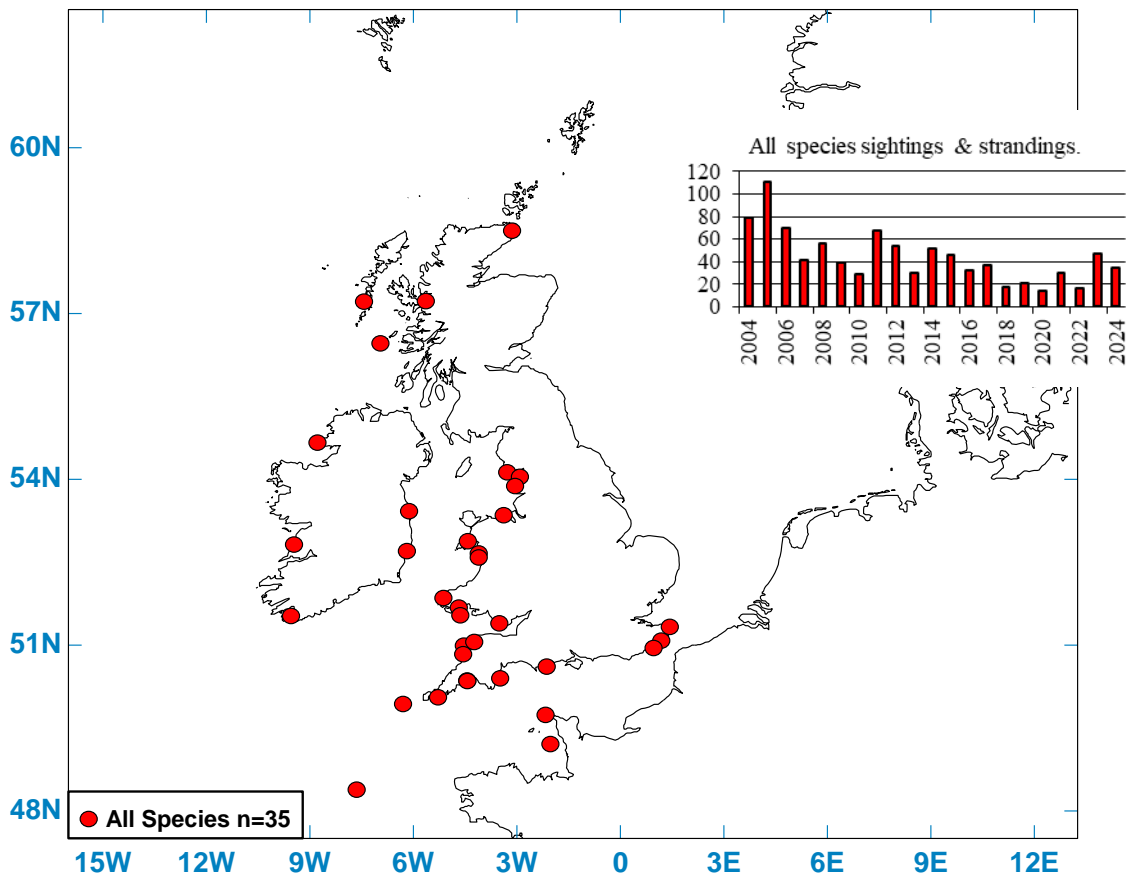


Figure 5. *All species sightings & strandings 2024.*

4.1 Sightings.

No live or dead Kemp's ridley sightings were reported during 2024. However, sightings of a live Kemp's ridley turtle has been recorded in recent years as shown in **Figure 6**.

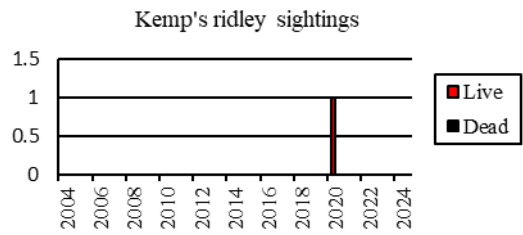


Figure 6. Kemp's ridley sightings 2024.

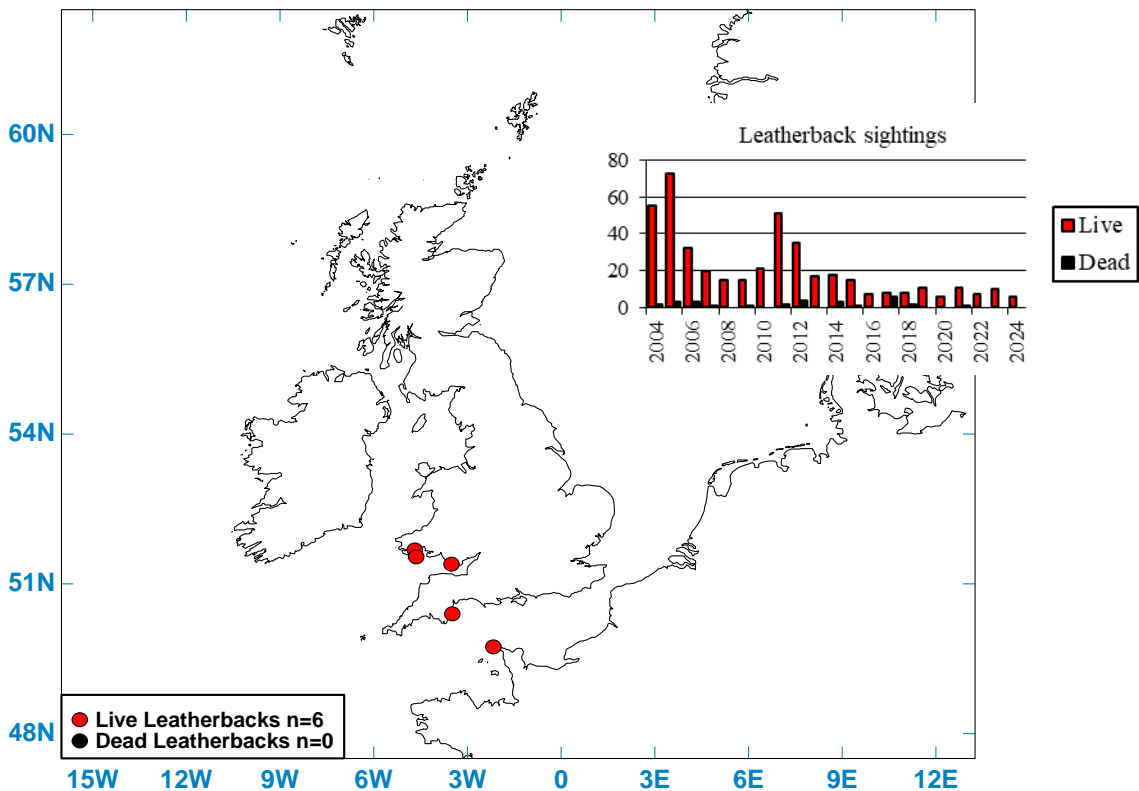


Figure 7. Leatherback sightings 2024.

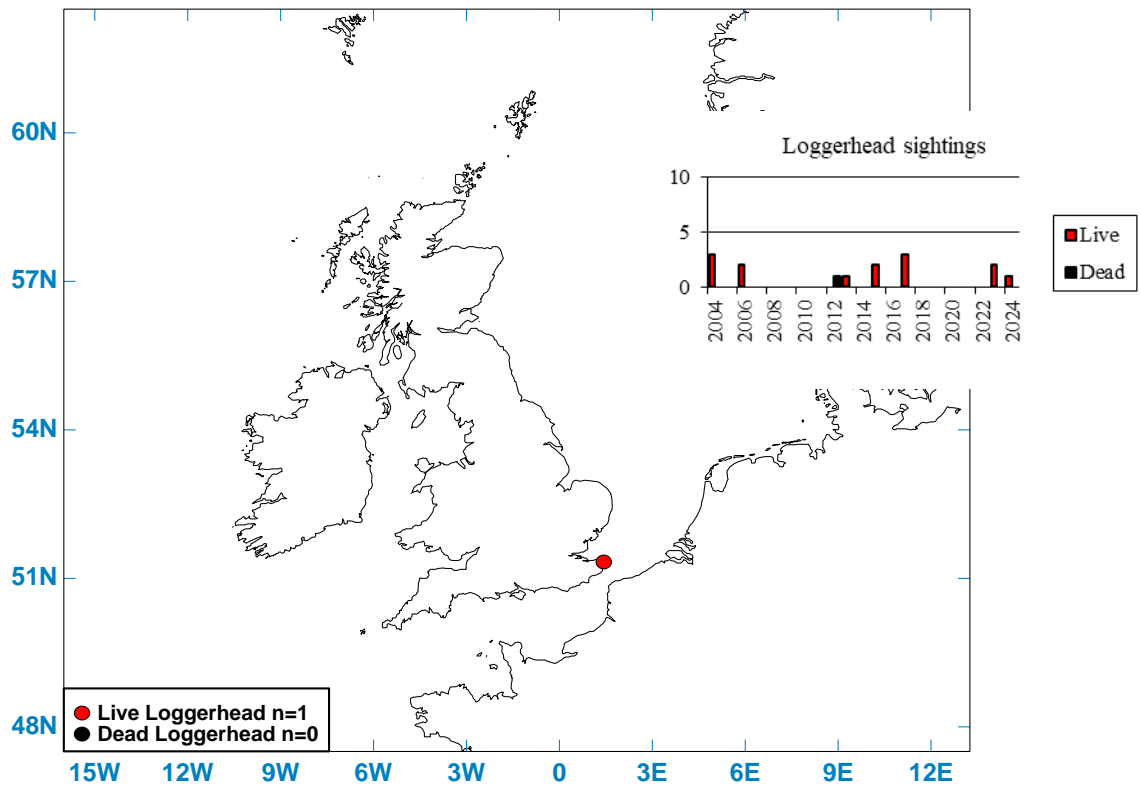


Figure 8. *Loggerhead sightings 2024.*

One Unidentified live sighting was reported during 2024 in Looe Bay, Cornwall, England.

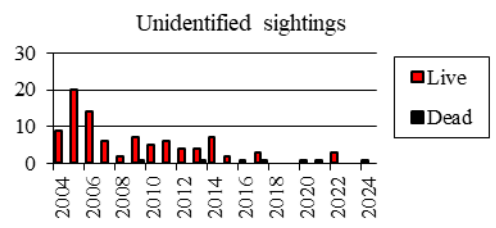


Figure 9. *Unidentified sightings 2024.*

4.2 Strandings.

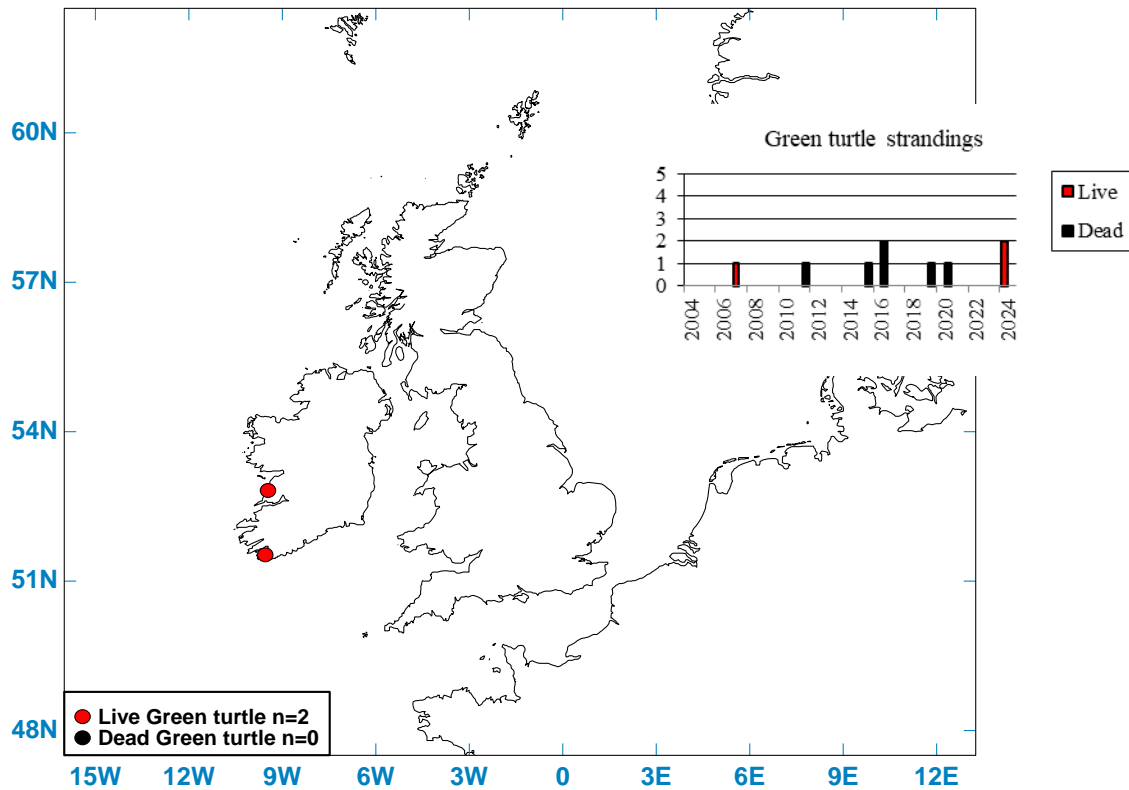


Figure 10. Green turtle strandings 2024.

No live or dead hawksbill turtle strandings were reported during 2024. There have been no records of hawksbill turtle strandings in the database. One sighting record exists off Cork Harbour in February 1983 when one was caught in a herring net and brought ashore alive.

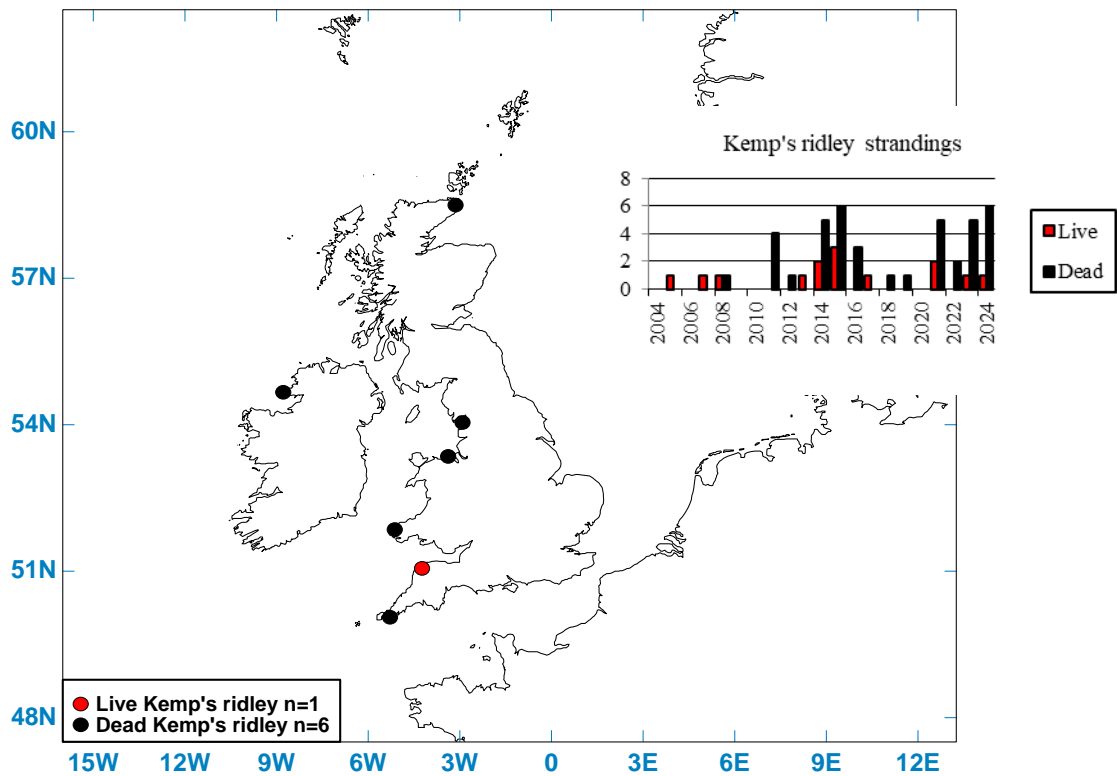


Figure 11. *Kemp's ridley strandings 2024.*

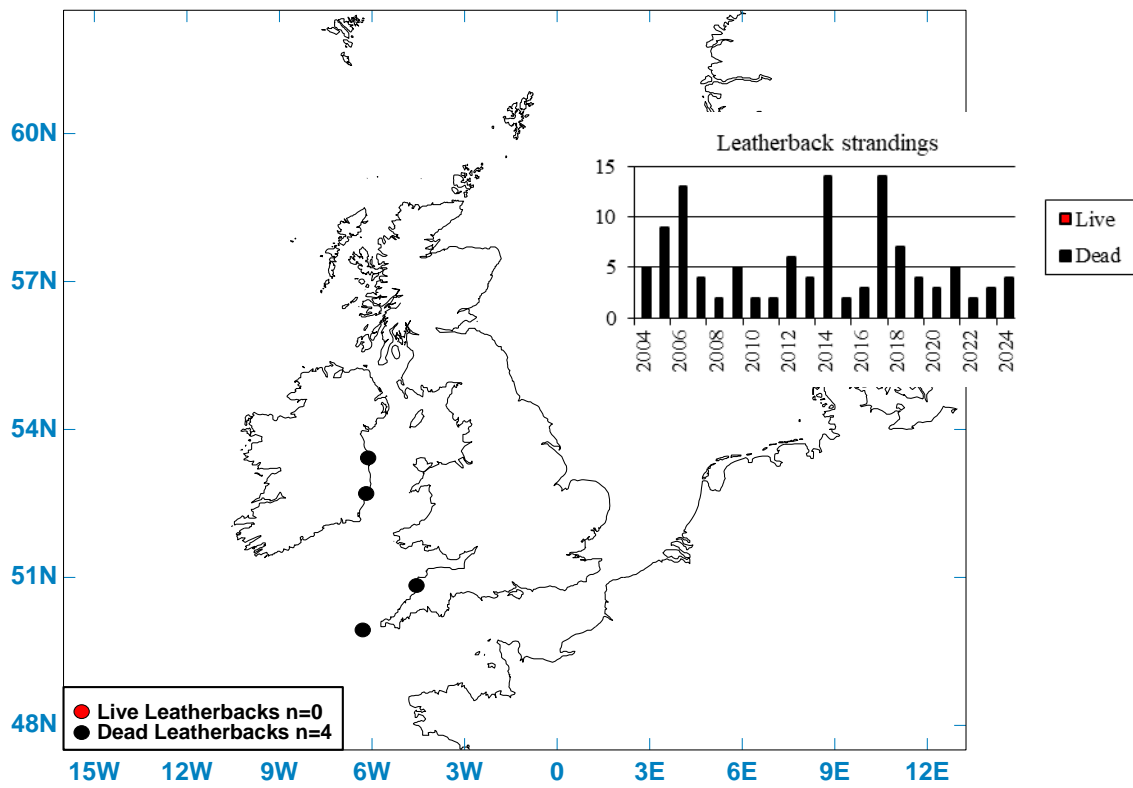


Figure 12. *Leatherback strandings 2024.*

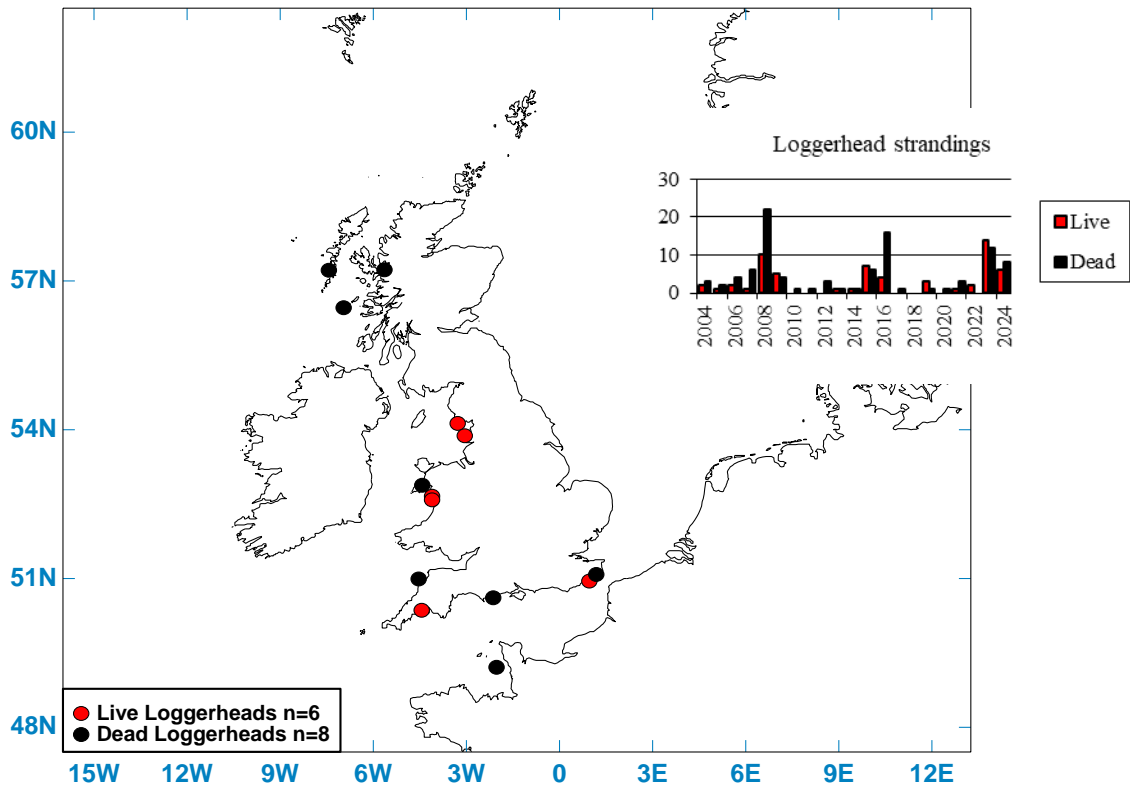


Figure 13. *Loggerhead strandings 2024.*

No live or dead olive ridley turtle strandings were reported during 2024. However, a live stranding of an olive ridley turtle was recorded in recent years as shown in **Figure 14**.

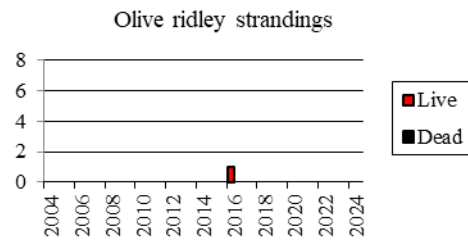


Figure 14. *Olive ridley strandings 2024.*

No live or dead unidentified turtle strandings were reported during 2024. However, strandings of unidentified turtles have been recorded in recent years as shown in **Figure 15**.

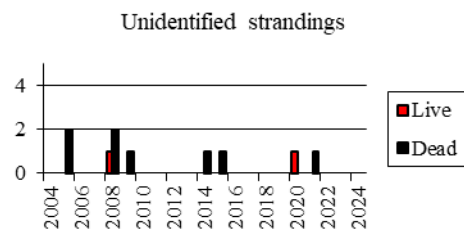


Figure 15. *Unidentified strandings 2024.*

All leatherback strandings and sightings, both dead and alive have been plotted by month for the period 2014 - 2024 (n=191) shown in **Figure 16**. The average figure was taken over 2014-2024 and plotted in **Figure 17**. The graph clearly shows the increase in numbers through the summer months and gives a good indication on when to expect leatherbacks around the British Isles & Irish coast. The records for the hard-shell species are more sporadic. Of the hard-shell species the most numerous recorded turtle over the 2014 - 2024 period is the loggerhead (n=92). The data for this species are plotted in **Figure 18** and **Figure 19**.

As numbers of Kemp's ridley turtle strandings appear to be increasing, presumably by the recovery of the species by guarding of existing nests in Mexico and translocation of nests to additional beaches, graphs **Figure 20** and **Figure 21** showing dead and alive strandings and sightings over the period 2014 - 2024 (n=46) have been included.

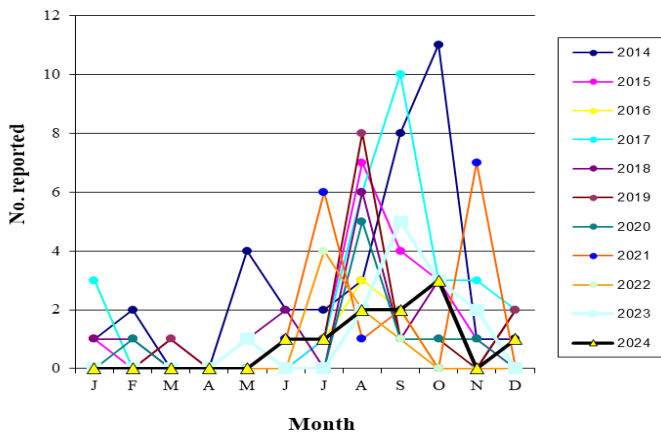


Figure 16. All leatherbacks by month.

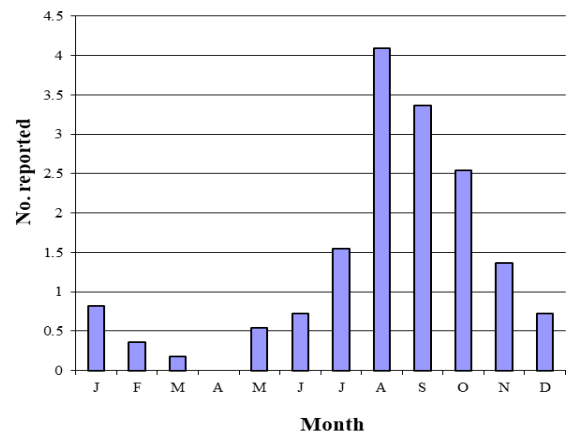


Figure 17. All leatherbacks average over 2014-2024

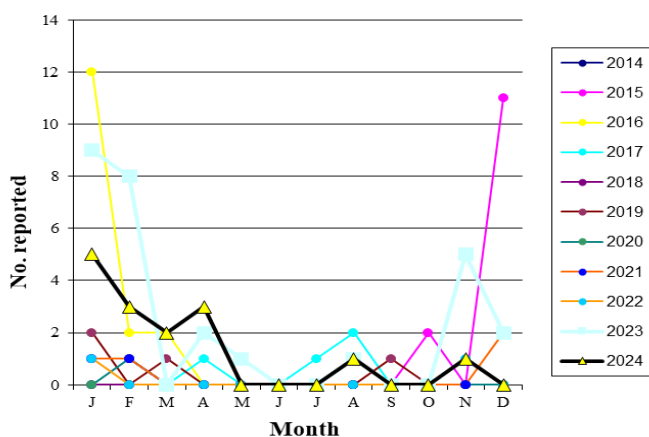


Figure 18. All loggerheads by month.

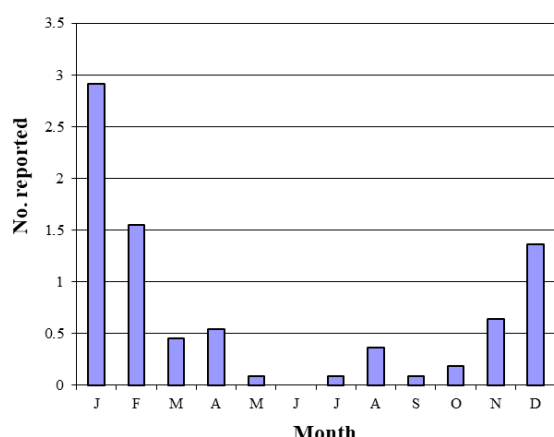


Figure 19. All loggerheads average over 2014-2024.

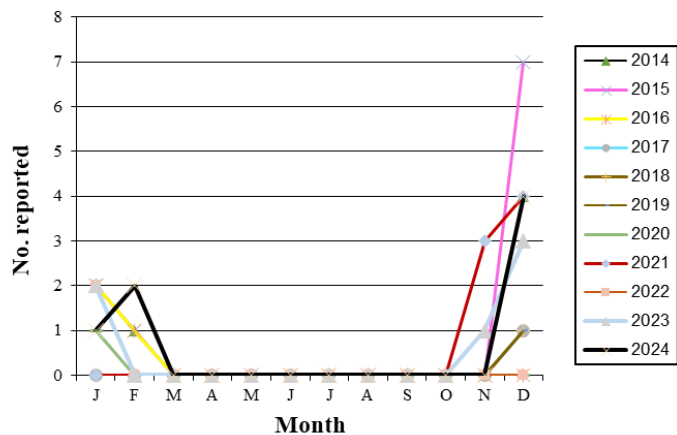


Figure 20. All Kemp's ridleys by month.

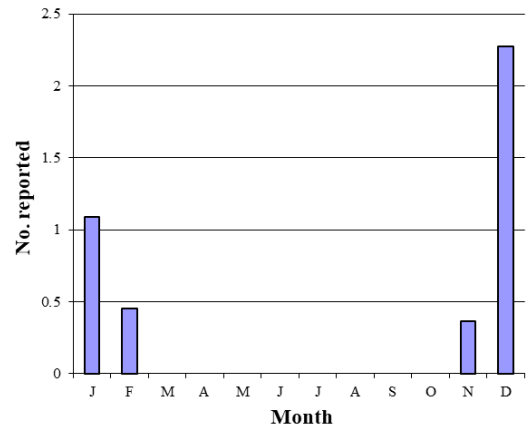


Figure 21. All Kemp's ridleys average 2014-2024.

Table 4.

Cumulative number of records in the TURTLE database.		
Country	All Species	
	2024	1748 - 2024
Rep. of Ireland	5	1377
England	15	745
Scotland	4	439
Wales	8	313
N. Ireland	0	41
Isle of Man	0	37
Channel Islands	2	21
Offshore	1	15
Total	35	2988

The 'Offshore' row in **Table 4.** includes records of turtles where it is difficult to attribute a county ie, animal far from shore or nearer to Europe than UK.

Countries are listed in **Table 4.** by descending order of total number of records shown in the year **1748 – 2024** column.

Table 5.

Species comparison from all TURTLE database records														
Country	2004 - 2014													
	2014 - 2024													
	GT		HB		KR		LBT		LOG		OR		UNI	
England	0	0	0	0	6	19	125	68	20	38	0	0	51	21
Scotland	1	1	0	0	4	9	67	36	19	9	0	0	10	0
Rep. of Ireland	1	2	0	0	2	4	155	45	22	22	0	0	15	2
Wales	0	4	0	0	6	13	80	35	15	15	0	1	11	1
Channel Islands	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	5	0	0	1	0
N. Ireland	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	2	1
Isle of Man	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	2	0	3	0	0	2	0
Offshore	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	2	1	0	0	0	1	0
Total	2	7	0	0	18	46	448	191	77	92	0	1	93	25

GT = Green turtle, HB = Hawksbill turtle, KR = Kemp’s ridley turtle, LBT = Leatherback turtle, LOG = Loggerhead turtle, OR = Olive ridley turtle, UNI = Unidentified turtle.

Table 6.

TURTLE Database Species Totals (1748 - 2024).	
Species	TOTAL
Green turtle (<i>Chelonia mydas</i>)	17
Hawksbill turtle (<i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>)	1
Kemp's ridley turtle (<i>Lepidochelys kempii</i>)	91
Leatherback turtle (<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>)	2166
Loggerhead turtle (<i>Caretta caretta</i>)	313
Olive ridley turtle (<i>Lepidochelys olivacea</i>)	1
Unidentified	399
Total animals	2988

The total records held in TURTLE are 2988 (end of 2024). However, some historical records with inadequate year data have been excluded in this report and from being uploaded to the NBN Atlas.

A breakdown of records for each country is shown in **Table 4**. However, the eleven-year comparison, 2004-2014 / 2014-2024 shown in **Table 5**, shows a marked decline in leatherback turtles recorded for most countries, this decline of leatherback turtles is likely to be a reflection of reduced effort. The increase in Kemp’s ridley turtles is likely to be the result of successful management of the breeding beach in Mexico where eggs have been introduced to additional sites and the nests have been afforded greater protection.

5. MATTERS ARISING.

5.1 Retrospective Reports.

No retrospective reports were received during 2024.

6. LIVE STRANDING EVENTS 2024.

Nine turtles were reported as live-stranding in 2024, these consisted of 6 loggerheads, one Kemp's ridley turtle and 2 Green turtles, these are listed below;

T2024/01 was a loggerhead turtle found alive, stranded cold-stunned at Barmouth, Gwynedd, Wales on the 1st January. The turtle was recovered to Bristol Aquarium where it unfortunately died.

T2024/03 was a loggerhead turtle found alive, stranded cold-stunned at Tywyn, Gwynedd, Wales, on the 23rd January. The turtle was recovered to Bristol Aquarium where it unfortunately died.

T2024/06 was a loggerhead turtle found alive, stranded cold-stunned at Barrow in Furness, Cumbria, England on the 4th of February. The turtle was recovered to Blackpool Sea Life Centre where it made a full recovery.

T2024/14 was a loggerhead turtle found alive, stranded cold-stunned at Dungeness, Kent, England on the 8th of April. The turtle was found on the beach entangled in seaweed. Released back into the sea by the finder.

T2024/15 was a loggerhead turtle found alive, stranded cold-stunned at Millendreath, Cornwall, England on the 9th April. The turtle was recovered to Blue Reef Aquarium, Newquay, Cornwall where it unfortunately died.

T2024/27 was a loggerhead turtle found alive, stranded cold-stunned at Cleveleys, Lancashire, England on the 26th November. The turtle was recovered to Blackpool Sea Life Centre where it made a full recovery.

T2024/29 was a Kemp's ridley turtle found alive, stranded cold-stunned at Westward Ho, Devon, England on the 23rd December. The turtle was recovered to Blue Reef Aquarium, Newquay, Cornwall where it unfortunately died.

T2024/30 was a Green turtle found alive, stranded cold-stunned at Quilty beach, Clare, Ireland on the 24th December. The turtle was recovered to Dingle Aquarium where it made a full recovery.

T2024/34 was a Green turtle found alive, stranded cold-stunned at Schull, Cork, Ireland on the 26th September. The turtle unfortunately died.

6.1 Rehabilitation

Of the nine 2024 live-strandings, three turtles, survived in rehabilitation.

T2024/06 was a loggerhead turtle found alive, stranded cold-stunned at Barrow in Furness, Cumbria, England on the 4th of February. The turtle was recovered to Blackpool Sea Life Centre where it made a full recovery. The turtle was flown to the Azores for release by Sea Life Centres.

T2024/27 was a loggerhead turtle found alive, stranded cold-stunned at Cleveleys, Lancashire, England on the 26th November. The turtle was recovered to Blackpool Sea Life Centre where it made a full recovery. The turtle is currently waiting to be released.

T2024/30 was a Green turtle found alive, stranded cold-stunned at Quilty beach, Clare, Ireland on the 24th December. The turtle was recovered to Dingle Aquarium where it made a full recovery. The turtle is currently waiting to be released.

6.2 Repatriation.

Following the failed attempt to fly 5 loggerhead turtles to Gran Canaria on the 8th February 2024, turtles **T2023/03**, **T2023/06**, **T2023/11**, **T2023/12** and **T2023/32**. were returned back to their respective rehab facilities by Airpets Ltd who kindly assisted with specialised ground transportation.

With the help of UK Government departments Defra and AHPA and Spanish Authorities in Madrid a European Health Certificate (EHC) for reptiles was drawn up. This however required the monitoring of the turtles at each facility for a period of 21 days by an Official Vet (OV) who was trained in the relevant species before embarkation.

Finding an OV with the relevant qualifications close to each facility proved to be challenging. One OV was found in Cornwall who was happy to assist free of charge but finding an OV to monitor the turtle in North Wales was more difficult and only one could be found requiring a four figure fee to cover fees and travel costs. Unfortunately, during this time the OV in Cornwall moved on.

Although we believe all relevant documentation had been identified and generated to enable passage into the Spanish mainland and onward movement to the Canaries the cost of the OV's could not be met.



Plate 1. Volunteer Royal Navy crew undergoing turtle handling.

With the dismal thought of the healthy turtles facing further time in their facilities, discussions were instigated with the Royal Navy about the possibility of the turtles being released into warmer waters whilst a vessel was on passage to its patrol area. If the turtles could be released into the high seas this would negate the EHC and monitoring by OV's with associated fees. Encouragingly, the request was met with 'how can we look to do this' and discussions were continued concerning condition requirements whilst on-board and animal husbandry. Two of the Ship's staff volunteered to attend Blue Reef Aquarium in Cornwall for a one day crash course in looking after the turtles whilst they would be in their care. During this time a sixth loggerhead turtle was added to the list, **T2023/39**.

In September, we were informed that HMS Medway would be leaving the UK to resume its role in the Caribbean to be on station to offer humanitarian assistance during the hurricane season. Although the Caribbean would be an ideal final destination, it was agreed that this would be far too long a duration for the animals to spend in their individual transportation crates and the high seas around the Azores would be a suitable

release point ticking all the boxes for their habitat requirements. On the day of departure, the turtles were driven overnight by aquarium personnel from their holding facilities and loaded onto the ship where all 6 loggerheads were later successfully released on the 20th September 2024 near the Azores. We are extremely grateful for the assistance of the Senior Service.

Further information can be found here, [Royal Navy helps return rare turtles to their original habitat](#)

The loggerhead turtle **T2023/31** named Barnacle Bill (due to the mass of goose barnacles attached to its shell) that stranded on Guernsey 6th November 2023 was obviously undergoing the same problem with repatriation following Brexit. Arrangements were made to move the turtle to the UK mainland in readiness in case a further RN vessel became available.

We are extremely grateful to Brighton Sea Life Centre who provided their facilities in holding the turtle in the UK until a vessel becomes available. It is hoped that the loggerhead turtle **T2024/27** that was recovered to Blackpool Sea Life Centre will be fit enough to join Barnacle Bill on this release.

7. BYCATCH.

No reports of fishery interactions with marine turtles were received during 2024. However, a report of a leatherback turtle entangled in a sailing marker buoy rope off Tenby, Wales in August was received. The turtle freed itself and swam off when approached.

8. SAMPLES & POST-MORTEM EXAMINATIONS.

The normal procedure for the taking of samples is from fresh animals that have been taken for post-mortem examination within the CSIP, SMASS, Cornwall Marine Pathology Team or the Irish Strandings project.

Six turtles were recovered to the project in 2024 in a suitable condition to undergo a full post-mortem examination. These were 4 loggerheads and 2 Kemp's ridleys listed below.

T2024/01 was a loggerhead turtle found alive, stranded cold-stunned at Barmouth, Gwynedd, Wales on the 1st January. The turtle was recovered to Bristol Aquarium where it unfortunately died. Cause of death was given as: Liver: Diffuse pallor (presume anaemia), Mucus membranes: Diffuse pallor (anaemia), Stomach: Foreign bodies with pyloric impaction.

T2024/03 was a loggerhead turtle found alive, stranded cold-stunned at Tywyn, Gwynedd, Wales, on the 23rd January. The turtle was recovered to Bristol Aquarium where it unfortunately died. Cause of death was given as: Cold stunned.

T2024/05 was a loggerhead turtle found stranded dead at Pwllheli, Gwynedd, Wales 27th January. The carcass was collected for examination within the CSIP. Cause of death was given as: Pending examination.

T2024/15 was a loggerhead turtle found alive, stranded cold-stunned at Millendreath, Cornwall, England on the 9th April. The turtle was recovered to Blue Reef Aquarium, Newquay, Cornwall where it unfortunately died. Cause of death was given as: Cold stunned.

T2024/28 was a Kemp's ridley turtle found stranded dead at Talacre beach, Gwynedd, Wales 13th December in a state of slight decomposition. Cause of death was given as: Pending examination.

T2024/29 was a Kemp's ridley turtle found alive, stranded cold-stunned at Westward Ho, Devon, England on the 23rd December. The turtle was recovered to Blue Reef Aquarium, Newquay, Cornwall where it unfortunately died. Cause of death was given as: Fungal pneumonia.

9. DATA SHARING.

The National Biodiversity Network (NBN) Gateway permanently closed on 31st March 2017 superseded by the NBN Atlas which went live on 1st April 2017. The TURTLE database has now been transferred to this platform having been updated to the new validation process required for the NBN Atlas.

10. UNUSUAL OCCURRENCES.

Sea temperatures continue to be recorded at increased levels with 2024 recorded at 1.29 degrees C above the 20th-century average of NOAA's 1850-2024 climate record and although total recorded turtle sightings and stranding records were lower than last year for the UK & Ireland (47 in 2023, 35 in 2024), increased hardshell species were recorded in Norway, Denmark, Germany, and the Netherlands over 2024. All recorded turtles were loggerheads.

1 in Norway (dead).

4 in Denmark (1 dead, 2 euthanised and 1 status unknown).

2 in Germany (1 dead and 1 alive).

10 in the Netherlands (4 alive and 6 dead).

Previous records consisted of maybe 1 or 2 over a 5 year period.

(Mainland European Data courtesy of Mark de Boer pers comm. 15/02/2025).



Plate 2. T2024/06 *Found alive at Barrow-in-Furness.*

T2024/06 was a loggerhead turtle found live-stranded at Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, England on the 4th February. The turtle was covered in green weed and had a satellite tag attached to its carapace. Subsequent investigations on the tag found the turtle to have been released by La Rochelle Aquarium where it was found stranded on the on the French Atlantic coast on 12/04/2023.

It was released on the 08/06/2023, its tag ceased transmitting on the 02/12/2023 when it was between Ireland and the United Kingdom. The turtle was recovered to Blackpool Sea Life Centre then later to Scarborough Sea Life Centre. The turtle was finally flown to the Azores for release 15/09/2024 courtesy of Sea Life Centres.

This is not the first turtle to have stranded in the UK released from mainland Europe and further work is needed to see if there is a northerly current hugging the coast or if this is a result of the turtles actively swimming north.

11. PUBLICITY.

A dedicated web-site to bring all turtle related information concerning turtles in the UK & Ireland together with online reporting forms for both sightings and strandings has been constructed at www.ukturtles.online

The Strandings Web-site has been maintained to provide details of MEM and the CSIP. Key contact

details are given for England, Scotland and Ireland. The pages can be viewed at www.strandings.com/
Annual reports and other turtle related publications are available at <https://strandings.com/annual-reports/>

Posters and leaflets produced to increase awareness of the project have continued to be distributed.

The NBN Atlas is now the preferred outlet for the TURTLE database.

12. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

Marine Environmental Monitoring wishes to acknowledge the following;

Cornwall Wildlife Trust, Dr Tom Doyle, Irish Whale and Dolphin Group (IWDG), University of Exeter's Cornwall campus, Gabriel King, Julia Cable and Dan Jarvis British Divers Marine Life Rescue, Nick Davison SMASS, Pascual Calabuig, Anglesey Sea Zoo, Sea Life Blackpool, Sea Life Scarborough, Sea Life Brighton, Blue Reef Aquarium, Dingle Oceanworld, Doug Herdson, Sarah Jones, Joanna Butler, Lin Gander, Steve Byrne GSPCA, John Knight, Jake Biggs at Airpets, Ellie West RSPCA, Mark de Boer, Rod Jones and the Royal Navy.

Natural England, NatureScot, National Parks & Wildlife Service and the Welsh Government for financial support towards the British & Irish TURTLE database.

Defra for providing funds for transportation of turtles for release into the wild.

13. APPENDICES.

- Appendix 1. 2024 TURTLE data.
- Appendix 2. UK Turtle Code.
- Appendix 3. Morphometrics.



An Roinn Tithíochta,
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreacht
Department of Housing,
Local Government and Heritage



Ariennir yn Rhannol gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Part Funded by
Welsh Government

Appendix 1.

RecordKey	Species	Category	Stranding	Alive/Dead	EndDate	Country	County	Location	Notes
T2024/01	LOG	ST	ALIVE	01/01/2024	WALES	GWYNEDD	Barmouth	Recovered and taken to Bristol Aquarium by Mat Westfield 01/01/2024. Died overnight 04/01/2024. To be collected for examination by Rob Deaville.	
T2024/02	LOG	ST	DEAD	05/01/2024	ENGLAND	DEVON	Hartland Point	Carcass moderate to advanced decomposition. Head and limbs missing when recovered next day presumably by scavengers.	
T2024/03	LOG	ST	ALIVE	23/01/2024	WALES	GWYNEDD	Tywyn	Recovered by Mat Westfield, relayed to Bristol by Ellie West RSPCA. Died Friday night 26/01/2024.	
T2024/04	LOG	ST	DEAD	25/01/2024	CHANNEL ISLANDS	JERSEY	Archironel beach, What3words //in	Juvenile taken to New Era Vets by BDMLR Medics where confirmed dead.	
T2024/05	LOG	ST	DEAD	27/01/2024	WALES	PWLLHELI		Recovered by Mat Westfield for examination within CSIP.	
T2024/06	LOG	ST	ALIVE	04/02/2024	ENGLAND	CUMBRIA	Barrow in Furness	Fairly large loggerhead covered in green weed and fitted with a sat-tag, recovered by BDMLR and taken to Blackpool SeaLife centre for rehab. Moved to Scarborough SL and Flown to Azores for release 15/09/2024.	
T2024/07	LOG	ST	DEAD	04/02/2024	SCOTLAND	OUTER HEBRIDES	South Uist	SMASS attempting recovery.	
T2024/08	KR	ST	DEAD	18/02/2024	ENGLAND	CORNWALL	Gunwalloe	Deemed too far gone for examination by James Barnett. Carcass recovered by CWT MSN.	
T2024/09	KR	ST	DEAD	12/01/2024	SCOTLAND	CAITHNESS	Between Kiess and Riess	Retrospective report.	
T2024/10	KR	ST	DEAD	22/02/2024	ENGLAND	LANCASHIRE	Half moon bay, Heysham	Advanced decomp carcass.	
T2024/11	LOG	ST	DEAD	23/02/2024	SCOTLAND	HIGHLAND	Glenelg	Carcass looked reasonably fresh in photo so SMASS informed. Nothing found the next day.	
T2024/12	LOG	ST	DEAD	07/03/2024	SCOTLAND	INNER HEBRIDES	Balephull beach, Isle of Tiree	Carcass looked reasonably fresh, SMASS to check.	
T2024/13	LOG	ST	DEAD	28/03/2024	ENGLAND	KENT	Folkstone	Report via MCS reporting form, confirmation photographs received from finder. Very small loggerhead turtle in-tact moderated decomposition.	
T2024/14	LOG	ST	ALIVE	08/04/2024	ENGLAND	KENT	Dungerness	Report via Dan Jarvis BDMLR, MoP found juvenile loggerhead upside down entangled in seaweed. Turtle was released into the sea.	
T2024/15	LOG	ST	ALIVE	09/04/2024	ENGLAND	CORNWALL	Millendreath, near Looe.	Report via Dan Jarvis BDMLR, loggerhead at Millendreath, Cornwall transported to Blue Reef Aquarium for rehab. May need to move it on as 5 loggerheads already held. Died next day.	
T2024/16	LOG	ST	DEAD	09/04/2024	ENGLAND	DORSET	Kimmeridge	Report via Dan Jarvis BDMLR. Stored frozen at the Dorset Wild Seas Centre.	
T2024/17	LBT	SEA	ALIVE	25/06/2024	WALES	VALE OF GLAMORG	Off Stout Point	Video posted on 'I Love Langland' Facebook page by David Rowlands 25th June. Video by Nathan Gratten. 100 metres off Stout point.	
T2024/18	LBT	SEA	ALIVE	16/07/2024	WALES	PEMBROKESHIRE	Off Tenby	Entangled in a sailing marking buoy. Freed itself and swam off when approached.	
T2024/19	LOG	SEA	ALIVE	01/08/2024	ENGLAND	KENT	Off Ramsgate	Sighted from fishing vessel off Ramsgate. Loggerhead seen swimming close to boat, amount of weed attached to the turtle.	
T2024/20	LBT	SEA	ALIVE	08/08/2024	ENGLAND	DEVON	120 metres off Berry Head.	Sighted during seabird count 120 metres off Berry Head. No photograph submitted but adequate sketch.	
T2024/21	UNI	SEA	ALIVE	18/08/2024	ENGLAND	CORNWALL	Looe Bay	Sighted from vessel, no further information.	
T2024/22	LBT	SEA	ALIVE	29/08/2024	WALES	PEMBROKESHIRE	Off Carmarthen Bay	Sighted from vessel.	
T2024/23	LBT	ST	DEAD	19/09/2024	ENGLAND	ISLES OF SCILLY	Innisidgen, St Mary's	Tissue samples have been retrieved and will be sent to Rob Deaville, the head has also been retrieved and will be going to licence holder Richard Lawrence.	
T2024/24	LBT	SEA	ALIVE	14/09/2024	OFFSHORE	offshore	Sighted from vessel	Sighted from vessel. Very limited info from report.	
T2024/25	LBT	ST	DEAD	20/10/2024	ENGLAND	CORNWALL	Crooklets beach, Bude.	Turtle located just over the railings in front of the Beach Restaurant	
T2024/26	LBT	SEA	ALIVE	26/10/2024	CHANNEL ISLANDS	ALDERNEY	Area sighted called 'The ledge'.	Turtle surfaced next to local anglers boat.	
T2024/27	LOG	ST	ALIVE	26/11/2024	ENGLAND	LANCASHIRE	North Promenade, Rossall, Rossall	Recovered by Scott Blacker, Blackpool Sea Life Centre. Later moved to Scarborough Sea Life.	
T2024/28	KR	ST	DEAD	13/12/2024	WALES	GWYNEDD	Talacre beach.	Reported by BDMLR. Stored at Bangor Uni freezer for collection by Mat Westfield CSIP in the New Year.	
T2024/29	KR	ST	ALIVE	23/12/2024	ENGLAND	DEVON	Westward Ho	Reported by BDMLR. Medics to attend and hopefully deliver to Blue Reef Aquarium. What 3 words //afflict.texted.producing. Died 08/01/2025 sent James Barnett for pme.	
T2024/30	GT	ST	ALIVE	24/12/2024	EIRE	CLARE	Quilty beach	Recovered to Dingle Oceanworld.	
T2024/31	KR	ST	DEAD	21/12/2024	EIRE	DONEGAL	Siver strand	Collected and delivered to UCC for examination.	
T2024/32	KR	ST	DEAD	24/12/2024	WALES	PEMBROKESHIRE	Newgale beach.	Found retrospectively on Wales.online. Possible incorrect advice on reporting given to Wales.online by MCS.	
T2024/33	LBT	ST	DEAD	05/12/2024	EIRE	DUBLIN	Portmarnock beach	Retrospective report. Skin sample taken for ICGTB and ossicles for NPWS.	
T2024/34	GT	ST	ALIVE	26/09/2024	EIRE	CORK	Schull	Estimated date of stranding and location by IWDG. Weight 7.5kg.	
T2024/35	LBT	ST	DEAD	27/10/2024	EIRE	WEXFORD	Kilgorman		



The United Kingdom & Irish Turtle Code

Advice for sea users on how to deal with marine turtle encounters

V 3.1 2025

As a sea user, you can help in the effort to protect endangered marine turtles by providing information about your encounters with these spectacular creatures in UK waters.

MARINE TURTLES ARE LEGALLY PROTECTED

There is no offence if turtles are caught accidentally in fishing gear. Nor is it an offence to help turtles if entangled or stranded, or temporarily to hold dead turtles for later examination by experts.

However, marine turtles are protected in Britain.

This means that:

- turtles may not be deliberately killed or caught
- live turtles may not be landed unless for the purpose of tending them or enabling their subsequent release
- dead turtles or shells obtained from turtles in UK waters may not be possessed unless the animal was lawfully acquired
- turtles and their derivatives may not be sold or offered for sale without UK government permission, unless they are antiques acquired before 1st June 1947 (with documented proof)
- turtles and their derivatives may not be imported or exported without UK government permission.

The following legislation pertains to marine turtles:

- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), in England and Wales.
- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, in England and Wales.
- Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 as amended, in Scotland.
- Conservation (Natural Habitats etc.) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007.
- Control of Trade in Endangered Species (Enforcement) Regulations (1997) as amended, in the UK.
- Customs and Excise Management Act 1979.
- Isle of Man Wildlife Act 1990.

PLEASE REPORT ALL TURTLE ENCOUNTERS

ENGLAND/WALES & SCOTLAND

ALL RECORDS

Rod Penrose or Mat Westfield, Marine Environmental Monitoring.
01239 683033 (24hrs)
info@strandings.com

LIVE STRANDINGS/ ENTANGLEMENTS

RSPCA 0300 1234999
BDMLR 01825 765546

ISLE OF MAN

Dr Peter Duncan
DEFA - Isle of Man Government
01624 685835 (main)
Marine Operations Centre
01624 686628 (24hrs)

SCOTLAND

DEAD STRANDINGS

Nick Davison, Scottish Marine Animal Strandings Scheme (SMASS)
07979 245893
reports@strandings.org

LIVE STRANDINGS/ ENTANGLEMENTS

SSPCA 03000 999999

NORTHERN IRELAND

ALL RECORDS

DAERA Marine Wildlife Team.
Marine.Wildlife@daera-ni.gov.uk

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

ALL RECORDS

Dr Tom Doyle
School of Biological, Earth & Environmental Sciences,
University College Cork

00353 (0) 87 1354938 (24hrs)

Report online at: www.euroturtle.org/turtlecode & www.mcsuk.org

RECORD THE FOLLOWING DETAILS

All information is valuable, but the following details are particularly useful:

- A description** of the turtle (alive or dead), identification of species (at least to leatherback/hard-shelled level) and overall straight length. Note any damage (e.g. cuts, scars) and **take photographs** when possible.
- Location** (longitude & latitude/ OS grid reference), **date** and **time** of sighting.
- Other observations**, such as turtle's behaviour, whether caught in fishing gear (including exact nature of entanglement, gear involved) etc.
- Presence of tags**. Many conservation projects place plastic or metal tags on turtles' flippers, which display identification numbers and a return address. Record any tag details if this can be done without causing disturbance to the turtle.

Please report all dead turtles, even if they have to be discarded at sea. Records from diaries or logbooks, however old, are also of interest.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU FIND A SICK OR ENTANGLED TURTLE

Immediately report the turtle to the relevant contact. Marine turtles will drown if trapped underwater, but prompt action can save them. A turtle that is entangled or trapped is likely to be stressed. Large turtles deliver a serious bite and a blow from a flipper can be painful, so be careful. Due to possible health risks involved in handling turtles, always wear rubber gloves.

TURTLES ENTANGLED AT SEA

Approach calmly and cautiously and ensure first of all that the turtle's head is above water so that it can breathe if it is alive.

ALIVE: AVOID TOWING TURTLES TO SHORE. They should be disentangled and released at sea whenever possible.

If alert & active

- Do not use a gaff to pull the turtle alongside and do not haul leatherbacks aboard.
- Avoid pulling hard on the turtle's flippers as they may dislocate or break.
- Carefully disentangle the turtle, making sure that as much net and line as possible has been removed before the animal is released.
- Make sure that the vessel is stopped and out of gear before carefully sliding the turtle back into the water.
- Ensure that the turtle is clear of the vessel before moving away.

ONLY if disentanglement at sea is impossible should the turtle be brought ashore.

Tow leatherbacks very slowly and make sure the animal's head is above water so that it can breathe. Release leatherbacks in shallow water, not on land. Other species should be retained and reported.

If traumatised/inactive

(no or slight movement, limbs flexible and limp, no decomposition)

Severely traumatised hard-shelled turtles can be saved if they are small enough to fit on your boat.

- Wrap the turtle in a dry towel or blanket. Do not cover the nostrils.
- Place the animal in a sheltered and secure place on its belly. To drain the lungs, raise the back end of the shell so the turtle is resting at approximately 30°. Keep it in this position until you return to shore.
- Leatherbacks should **not** be hauled aboard. If inactive, they can be towed to shore very slowly, ensuring they are able to breathe at all times.

DEAD: There may be serious health risks involved in handling dead turtles.

Inexperienced individuals are advised not to touch them. Where possible, record the details listed above and, only if the specimen is fresh, bring it back to shore and place in cold storage. Always wear rubber gloves when handling turtles.

TURTLES STRANDED ON LAND

Leatherback turtles

Leatherbacks found stranded on beaches are usually very weak, dead or dying, but might still be saved.

If apparently uninjured:

- Carefully drag the turtle back to the sea and release it (enlist the help of several people and pull the shell rather than the flippers).
- Do not drag the animal over rocks, as this will cause severe damage.
- If stranded on rocks, it may be better to wait for the incoming tide to provide some buoyancy before dragging the turtle back to sea.

Other species (hard-shelled)

Loggerhead, Kemp's ridley, green and hawksbill turtles encountered on UK shores are usually cold stunned juveniles and should not be placed back in the sea.

- Wrap the turtle in a dry towel, do not cover the nostrils
- Place the animal in a sheltered and secure place on its belly. If inactive, raise the back end of the shell so the turtle is resting at approximately 30° to drain the lungs. Report the turtle as soon as possible.

Dead turtles of all species are valuable for research and should be reported as soon as possible. Fresh specimens should be preserved in a cold store where possible. These animals will undergo a full post-mortem examination within the DEFRA-funded UK Cetacean Strandings Investigation Project (CSIP).

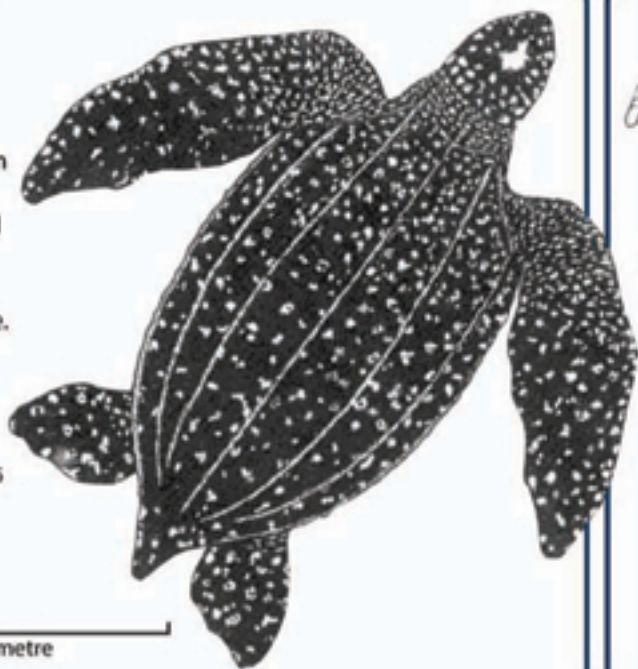
Endorsed by:



Of the world's seven marine turtle species, six have been recorded in UK waters. They are the leatherback, loggerhead, Kemp's ridley, olive ridley, green and hawksbill turtles. The leatherback, the largest marine turtle, is the species most frequently recorded in UK waters. Leatherbacks have a flexible, leathery shell and are unique among reptiles in that they are able to metabolically raise their body temperature above that of their immediate environment, allowing them to survive in colder waters. Each summer leatherbacks migrate to UK waters where they feed on jellyfish. The other five species have hard shells and are less frequently encountered in UK waters, where they usually occur as stray juveniles carried by currents from warmer seas.

LEATHERBACK TURTLE

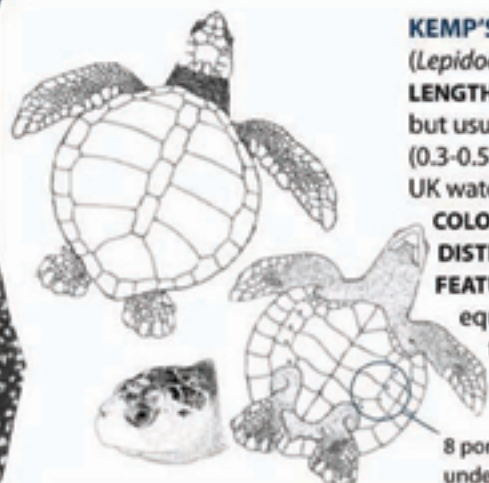
(Dermochelys coriacea)
Most frequently recorded species in UK waters.
LENGTH: up to 2.91 metres.
COLOUR: black, spotted with white.
DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: large, up to 916 kg, pronounced longitudinal ridges on shell, which tapers to a blunt spike.



SCALE 1 metre

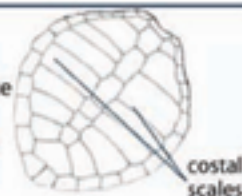
KEMP'S RIDLEY TURTLE

(Lepidochelys kempii)
LENGTH: up to 1 metre, but usually juveniles (0.3-0.5 metres) occur in UK waters.
COLOUR: grey/olive.
DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: shell width equal to or greater than shell length.



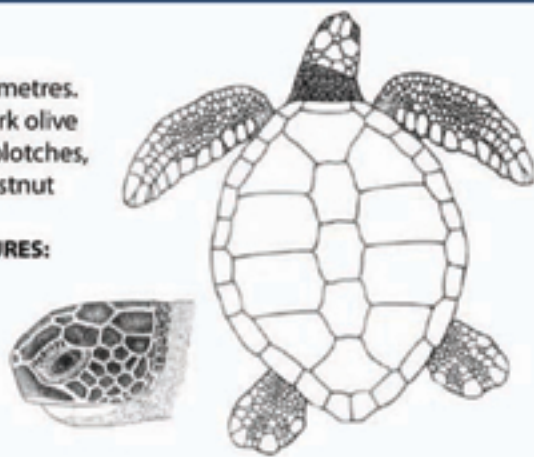
8 pores visible on underside (4 either side)

NB: The olive ridley turtle (*Lepidochelys olivacea*) occurs in the Atlantic, but has been recorded only once in UK waters to date. Similar to Kemp's ridley with 8 pores on underside, but has 5-9 pairs of costal scales on shell.



GREEN TURTLE

(Chelonia mydas)
LENGTH: up to 1.5 metres.
COLOUR: adults dark olive or grey with dark blotches, juveniles have chestnut coloured shell.
DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: smooth shell, rounded facial profile (not angular).



LOGGERHEAD TURTLE

(Caretta caretta)
LENGTH: adults up to 1.5 metres, but usually juveniles (0.3-0.5 metres) occur in UK waters.
COLOUR: reddish brown.
DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: large head, juveniles have small spikes along spine of shell.



HAWKBILL TURTLE

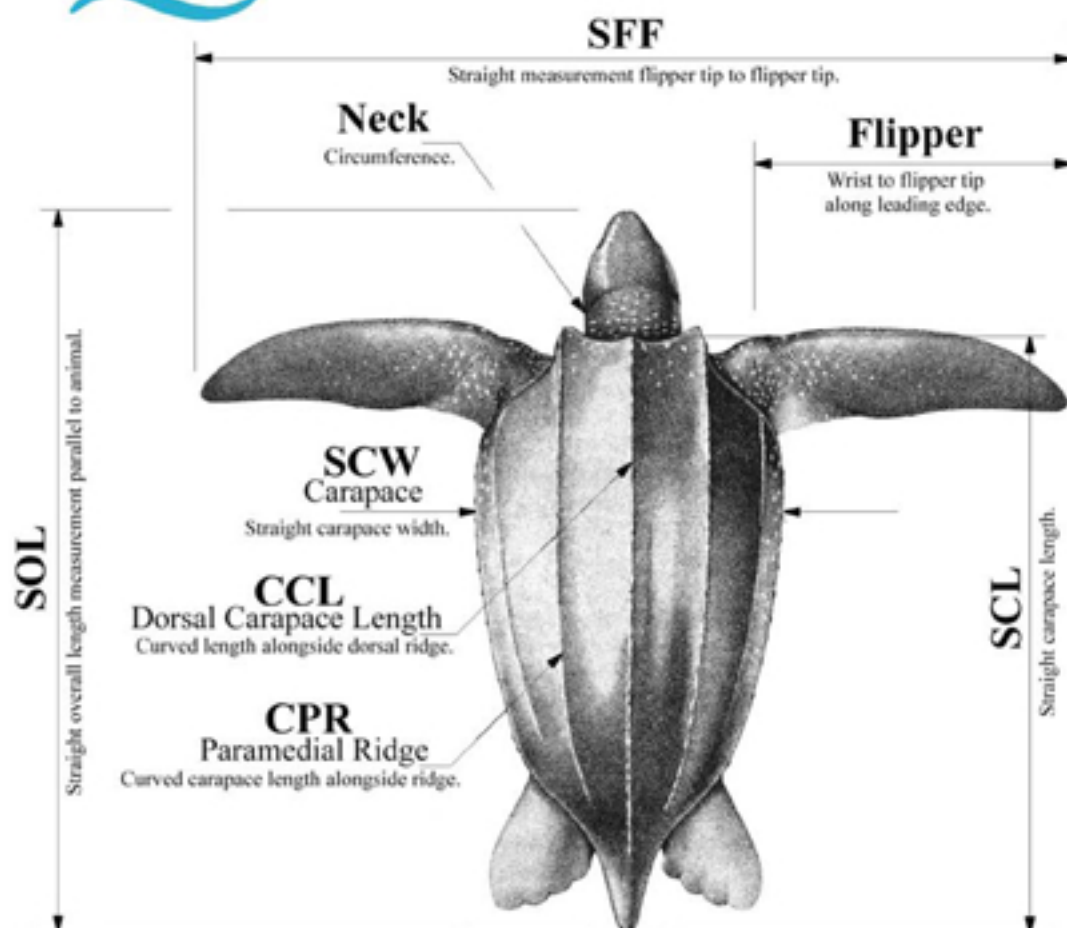
(Eretmochelys imbricata)
LENGTH: up to 1.2 metres.
COLOUR: brown, amber and black tortoiseshell pattern.
DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: shell scales overlapping, narrow tapered head with bird-like beak. Largely tropical distribution, rarely encountered in UK waters.



MARINE TURTLES ARE THREATENED

In UK waters threats include:

- **Accidental entanglement in fishing gear.** Although turtles can dive to great depths, they become stressed and drown when trapped underwater by fishing gear. Fishing gear discarded at sea may also entangle and kill turtles.
 - **Marine litter,** especially plastic, which turtles mistake for jellyfish. Once ingested, plastic can block a turtle's gut leading to starvation.
 - **Boat collisions.** Turtles often bask and must surface regularly to breathe, leaving them vulnerable to boat strike.
- PLEASE BE VIGILANT, AND DO NOT DISCARD FISHING GEAR OR LITTER AT SEA.**



Other Measurements Required.

COL	Curved Overall Length.
CFF	Curved Flipper tip to Flipper tip over Animal.
CCW	Curved Carapace Width.
DMAX	Maximum Body Depth. (Straight).
TTL	Total Tail Length from Plastron.
PTL	From Centre of Cloacal Opening to end of Tail.
WEIGHT	In Kilograms.
SEX	If Known.

